



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 17, 2020

Professor: Health Officials Manufacture COVID “Hot Spots” and Demonize Red States

It’s a bit like that old joke about the USSR’s reporting on their fastest car losing a race to an American car:

“Soviet Car Comes in Second in Race — American Car Finishes Next to Last.”

What’s no joke, though, is the half story our mainstream media are telling regarding COVID-19 “hot spots,” because this deception is leading to half-baked policy. Reporting on the story Friday, the *College Fix* [wrote](#):



Want to know how a small Florida county with around 2,500 COVID-19 cases and 10 deaths became a “hot spot” for the disease? Or how an even more remote Texas county with zero cases until June, a trickle in the past few weeks, and *no deaths to date* also set off federal alarm bells?

Amy Anderson, a nursing professor at Texas Christian University, explains how public health officials are distorting statistics on the virus to promote a transparently false narrative: that small population centers in red states are ground zero for so-called “hot spots.”

In an [essay](#) for the Heritage Foundation’s *Daily Signal*, Anderson and former White House advisor Doug Badger pick apart the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s curious method for identifying “hot spots.” Both are visiting fellows at Heritage.

[Yahoo News](#) obtained a CDC document purporting to show that nine of the top 10 hot spots were in Texas and Florida — states that have been under relentless media assault for imposing less draconian measures than blue states.

But what Yahoo won’t tell you, Anderson and Badger write, is that in “this case, the CDC defined a ‘hot spot’ as a county with the most cases per 100,000 population over the most recent two-week period. The metric is prone to designate sparsely populated counties reporting temporary spikes in cases as being hotbeds of coronavirus infection.”

In other words, it’s a bit like, with respect to a safe county that had one theft in 2019 but two in 2020, reporting, “County Sees 100 PERCENT Spike in Robberies!”

“More importantly,” however, Anderson and Badger also tell us, the metric “provides no insight as to the nature of the ‘outbreak’ in those counties.” But the writers do.

Consider America’s hottest hot spot, Columbia County, Florida. “At first glance, there’s nothing especially remarkable about Columbia County’s COVID-19 data. As of Aug. 1, it had [2,562](#) confirmed cases and just 10 deaths. A closer look shows that the county reported nearly 500 of those cases in a two-day period (July 20-21),” Anderson and Badger relate. Scary, huh?

Well, it “turns out that there was an [outbreak](#) at the Columbia Correctional Institution, a state facility that can house [1,427](#) inmates,” they continue. “That outbreak, which involved hundreds of prisoners,



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accounts for 54% of the county's COVID-19 cases." And that's how Columbia became the CDC's number one COVID con county.

"A similar pattern prevails in two of the other four Florida 'hot spots' identified in the CDC document," Anderson and Badger also inform.

"Jackson County (No. 7) had reported 1,600 cases as of Aug. 1," they continue. "It attributes its place on the list to a total of nearly 500 cases reported in two days (July 24 and 28). Similar to Columbia County, 56% of its cases occurred in its correctional facility (41%) and nursing homes (15%)."

While you can read all the details in Anderson's and Badger's article, here's a summary of a few other cases:

- The "spike" in Glades County, Fla. (No. 8), is largely attributable to an Immigration and Customs Enforcement [detention center](#).
- Real County, Texas (No. 3), had an increase due almost entirely to a nursing home outbreak. Yet despite the county having *zero* SARS-CoV-2 deaths to date, it's now a "hot spot."
- In mid-July, Texas's DeWitt (4) and Refugio (6) counties "were both host to [four Texas Military Department COVID-19](#) testing sites offering approximately 500 free COVID-19 tests in each county to improve access to testing for rural residents," relates Anderson and Badger. Of course, Captain Obvious moment: A spike in testing means a spike in virus positives — and can help win you a place on the hot spot list.

So the mainstream-media reporting is supposed to convince us that freedom=death and lockdowns=life (even though [studies find](#) that lockdowns not only don't save lives, but cost them). Yet "a closer look at the CDC's top 'hot spots' shows that most of them involved outbreaks among prisoners and nursing home residents — people who are [*already*] *literally on lockdown*," Anderson and Badger point out. (Emphasis added.)

What follows are [some statistics that really matter](#), but that the mainstream media do their best to hide. As of August 14, per 100,000 population:

New York had 169 deaths.

Florida had 41.

Texas had 34.

South Dakota, *which never locked down*, had 17.

By the way, Sweden, a nation that never locked down, [is also doing better](#) than New York and at least as well as locked-down European countries.

As for Wuhan virus "spikes," the most shameless mainstream media omission is failure to mention a simple truth: Increased SARS-CoV-2 contraction — along with low hospitalization and mortality numbers — is *a good thing*. That's how society achieves herd immunity *without a vaccine*.

At the end of the day, the data are definitive: Lockdowns are pointless, bull-in-a-china-shop measures that [do not save lives, but destroy them](#) and which delay herd immunity. Citizens should not tolerate talk of their reinstatement or perpetuation, and politicians responsible for visiting them upon us, one of American history's greatest blunders, should be ousted from office — and never work in public service again.



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Selwyn Duke (@SelwynDuke) has written for The New American for more than a decade. He has also written for The Hill, Observer, The American Conservative, WorldNetDaily, American Thinker, and many other print and online publications. In addition, he has contributed to college textbooks published by Gale-Cengage Learning, has appeared on television, and is a frequent guest on radio.



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